

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
 NEWS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING TRIP TO EUROPE, WITH EMPHASIS ON OPERATIONS  
 IN HAITI  
 PENTAGON  
 OCTOBER 5, 1994

STAFF: Good afternoon. Dr. Perry will start with a brief statement and then answer your question. Unfortunately, he has to leave at quarter of 2:00. Thank you.

Dr. Perry.

SEC. PERRY: Thank you, Ken.

I just returned last night from a very interesting and a very productive trip to Europe. I wanted to describe that to you briefly and then make a few comments about the ongoing operations in Haiti.

The first part of our meeting in Europe was at a meeting of defense ministers in Sevilla, Spain. The three major issues discussed at that meeting were a NATO policy on airstrikes in Bosnia. Secondly, we had discussions on NATO expansion. And third, we talked about the security problems on the southern flank of NATO. I'll comment on each of these briefly.

Relative to Bosnia, the ministers came to a unanimous agreement that we needed to press the Bosnian Serbs to accept the peace plan which had been formulated by the so-called contact group and which had been accepted by the Bosnian government. We also believe that it's a relatively narrow window of some months to do that and that we needed to apply pressure then in two different areas, first of all, by shutting off the flow of war materiel from Serbia, and, secondly, by making a more effective use of NATO airpower in response to

provocations.

The -- I want to emphasize that in all of our discussions the use of airpower, airstrikes, in Bosnia was considered to be dual key operation -- that is, NATO responds to a request for an airstrike from UNPROFOR, the U.N. forces on the ground. Now, given that we get that request, though, those airstrikes, we concluded, should be timely -- that is, they should be made in a matter of minutes after the provocation, not hours or days; secondly, they should be launched without tactical warning, in contrast to the way they are being handled now; and third, the aircrews should have multiple targets to select from in the mission. All of these -- all three of these factors will lead not only to greater -- avoiding the aircrews taking unnecessary risks, but will lead to more effective response.

The -- after the NATO meeting, and at the request of several of my fellow defense ministers, I went down to Split, Croatia, to meet with the U.N. officials there -- Mr. Akashi, General de Lapresle, and General Rose, as well as several other U.N. officials there. This was not a negotiating session. This is a meeting where I went to explain to them the background behind the decisions that were taken at the NATO ministers' meeting. And it was a very useful session, I think a very productive session. I would not characterize it as having reached an agreement, because that wasn't the purpose of the meeting. It was an information meeting, as I said, not a negotiating meeting.

The second issue we talked about at the defense ministers' meeting was NATO expansion, and we agreed that it was a question -- not a question of if NATO would expand, but rather it would be when and how. We agreed that this should be a gradual, orderly process. We talked in detail about what that process would be. We did not set schedule. We did not settle on particular countries to be included. But we did talk about how to get this process underway. We agreed that the Partnership for Peace would be the path to NATO for those members wishing to become members, and in

the meantime, the Partnership for Peace will allow aspiring NATO members "to breathe NATO air," to quote my colleague, Volker Ruehe, the German minister of defense.

Related to that question, and after the defense minister's meeting, I had a very interesting session at the Marshall Center. I spent Sunday evening there at the Marshall Center in Germany and met with and spoke to the first class attending the newly formed Marshall Center, which is about 70 to 80 officers, senior officers, in the East European and Central European countries -- formerly in the Warsaw Pact, formerly in the Soviet Union. These are all attending the Marshall Center now on a five-month course designed to teach them how the military functions in a democracy and also it looks specifically at peacekeeping operations. This was a very interesting -- very good course, well launched. And I'm very optimistic that this is going to be a successful program.

The third issue we talked about at the defense ministers' meeting was a focus on the southern flank. It was clear to all of the ministers there that NATO needed to be shifted -- had to shift its attention on what had been its preoccupation for decades, namely how to prevent or defeat an invasion coming through the central region in NATO to learning how, to learning how to contend with the ethnic and religious and national conflicts which are being spawned on the southern flank of NATO. Indeed, the French minister of defense, Francois Leotard, described the region in North Africa as an "arc of crisis."

I should footnote the importance of the attendance of this meeting of the French minister of defense, Leotard. This is the first time a French minister of has attended a NATO defense ministers' meeting for more than 25 years. I think this is a noteworthy and a significant event, and it was, among other things, related to the French interest in these two very important issues -- the southern flank security and the Bosnia issue.

After my meeting at NATO and after my visit to the Marshall Center, I met with our military commanders and troops in Europe. The task over there has changed dramatically for our forces in the last few years. In the old world, just five years ago, just a few years ago, the forces where there in a sense hunkered down,

2145 preparing for an invasion, to try to deter that invasion. Now the troops in Europe are a base, forward-deployed base, for further deployment to contingency operations all over the area, to all over Europe, the Middle East, Africa. This is the base from which we deployed for Desert Storm, we deployed for Deny Flight, Provide Promise, Provide Comfort, Restore Hope. All of that is done from our bases and our troops, commanders, in Europe.

They are responding very well to these new missions I would say enthusiastically and quite effectively. There is a real stress issue which we discussed with them because of the so-called personnel tempo or operational tempo which keeps them away from their homes and their bases a very high percentage of the time. And I spent a lot of time in my visit there talking both with the troops and commanders about what that personnel tempo issue was and what the effects of it was on performance.

I will give you some conclusions from that, but let me tell you this was based on a long evening session with all of our senior commanders in Europe and with visits to two different tactical operations there -- the 52nd Tactical Fighter Wing, which is in Spangdahlem, Germany, and the VII Corps Training Center Grafenwoehr, Germany.

These forces we have there, in my considered opinion, are the best trained and most capable military forces in the world. And over and over again they demonstrated to me and showed to me their capability and their readiness. Very, very impressive. They also have the whole set of problems which I have already described to you that could impact readiness a few years in the future. And on all this discussion of readiness, I want to make a sharp distinction between what I call near-term readiness -- the ability to go out and fight a war or go to a contingency operation today if we had to do it -- and medium-term readiness -- that is, the factors which may be eroding the ability to do that three or four or five years in the future. On my visit I saw ample evidence that the near term readiness is excellent; and I also saw evidence that there are factors on the way which can erode our ability to do that, three or four, five years from now, and it's my responsibility as the Secretary of Defense not only to maintain the first, but to try to deal with these problems of

erosion. This is not the time or the place to have a detailed discussion of that but let me say, there are two different actions that we can take and are taking to deal with his medium term readiness problem. One of those, which I discussed in some detail with our commanders is making a greater use of reserve and National Guard forces for contingency operations in Europe. That is already underway and we plan to expand that to relieve somewhat the high operational tempo of the active duty forces there.

And secondly, I believe it is necessary to have a shift in resources to put more money in quality of life initiatives, and as we put this year's budget together, that is exactly what we are doing, and you'll hear more about that later. But I do want to underscore that the near term readiness, the readiness of these troops to engage in combat operations today is absolutely first class. Now we saw that also demonstrated in the operations underway at Haiti, and I want to now shift over now to talking some about Haiti.

Start out by observing that that military operation, viewed as a military operation, has been exceptionally well executed. That is not a careless statement I'm making, it's a statement I made after careful review of all phases of that operation. It was a -- first of all a huge logistics operation; we began the deployment on the 19th, after only nine days of alert. That is, the president authorized me to begin to get ready for that deployment on September the 10th, and the forces started going in on the 19th. We -- in less than a week's time, we deployed 20,000 troops, we opened an airport, we opened a report -- a seaport, got both of them fully functioning, and created a major supply flow into that area. All of this was done on schedule, and it was done without accidents. That's the point -- that's the dog that didn't bark. Had there been accidents you would have had many stories about that, but this was a very difficult and complex operation that was performed essentially flawlessly.

This was the result, I believe, of superb planning by Admiral Miller and his team, and dating back many, many months and including detailed training and rehearsals for just the kind of operation that we are now conducting. And it was also a result of superb execution by

General Shelton and his team.

I would also like to observe that we have already made some very significant progress on building the foundations for democracy in Haiti. The parliament, as you know, has reconvened. It is considering not only amnesty legislation but legislation needed to enable a new government to perform. We expect -- I should say, parenthetically -- we expect parliamentary elections to occur later this year and a new parliament then to be formed as we go into the next year. As you also know, the mayor of Port-au-Prince, Evans Paul, has returned to office. Police Chief Francois has left the country, he is now in the Dominican Republic. The head of the paramilitary organization FRAPH, Mr. Constant, has renounced violence and appealed for calm, to his followers, and President Aristide has appointed some of his new administration. He has had a transition team in Port-au-Prince and he has announced his return will take place on the 15th of October.

All of this is happening while about 2,000 Haitians who were in Guantanamo have repatriated to Haiti. By the end of the day today, the number will be about 2,000. And this -- all of these add up to what I call significant progress in establishing the foundations for democracy.

Let me talk a little bit about the civil order question because that has gotten quite a bit of publicity. I'll start off by saying that it is much better than we anticipated and it continues to improve. Why did we anticipate violence? This is a country that has a history of violence. There were, by various estimates, more than 3,000 people killed in Haiti in the last few years systematically, not to mention the killings that have occurred from just random violence. So we knew that this was going to be a problem when we went in. We also know that there is a minority on the island that oppose Aristide, some of them quite prepared to use violence to register that opposition. Therefore, the surprise is not that there is some violence, but that there has not been more than there has been to date.

Now, I want to emphasize that our military forces do not simply accept violence just because there's a history there, and we are doing what we can to get it under control. We have, as you know, removed all of the heavy weapons from the FAD'H. We have removed some of the

weapons and detained some of the personnel from the paramilitary forces in the operations just occurred the last few days. We are buying back weapons; we have bought back more than 4,000 of them to date.

What you may not be aware of is we have squads of civil-military operation forces all over the country today in more than a dozen towns. The news has focused on Port-au-Prince primarily, and to a lesser extent at Cap-Haitien, but there are many other towns, and we have now reached -- by the end of this week, we expect to have people in almost 20 of those towns. As we speak, they're there in about a dozen of them. These are squads of civil-military forces trained in this sort of work who are there in the towns working with authorities in the town. They have been very well received. There has been no violence in this effort to date. They have worked effectively with the local police that are there, and they have kept calm and order in all of these other towns in Haiti.

In that same regard, let me tell you that the -- our military police, of whom we have about 1,300 in-country now, are performing a function of monitoring the Haitian police force, but that is an interim step until we get the international monitors in and functioning. We expect to have and have commitments of more than 1,000 international police monitors and police trainers, of whom about 200 are already in place.

Now, another issue which has come frequently up on Haiti is how many and how long, and I cannot give you crisp, clear answers to that. We are at a level of just under 20,000 today. We expect that to get down to about 15,000 by the end of the month, and to 6,000 or less by the time the U.N. force comes in, UNMIH force comes in.

As we go from 15,000 down, we will do that for two -- we will be able to come down on two objective factors. The first of them is getting order established, and we're making progress on that already, as I indicated. And the second is having the multinational force, international elements of the multinational force, arrive. There are to date 2,000 committed forces in the multinational force; these are now military force, not the police monitors I was talking about before, and of those, 300 are already in Haiti. This is the so-called Caricom battalion.

They are already in and taken over the operations of -- security operations at the port.

In sum, the Haiti operations, I believe, have gone very well to date. And when the American people look at this operation, they should be looking at the whole operation. Congressman Murtha, when he was down there over the weekend, made a very astute observation when he said we should not look at this through a straw, we should look at the whole country and the whole set of operations that are going on there, not individual clips of the random acts of violence that are occurring. So it has gone very well to date.

This is a difficult task and will continue to be a difficult task. It will take patience and it will take persistence. Most importantly, from my point of view, it is going to require great professionalism and great discipline on the part of the U.S. military that's there, both the forces, the squads that are out there in the streets, and their commanders. And I want to express full confidence that these forces and their commanders do have that professionalism, do have that discipline, they've demonstrated it to date, and I believe they will continue to demonstrate it.

Now, with that, I'd like to throw the floor open for questions. Suzanne?

Q: Mr. Secretary, do you believe -- you've gone through a few of the steps that have been taken by Mr. Aristide and also some of the troops, but do you think enough is being done to prepare for his return? Is there enough time to keep a civil order, as you say being so important, calm?

SEC. PERRY: I think the actions under way by the U.S. military forces are adequate in that regard. And particularly I wanted to emphasize these civil military operations spreading throughout the country. And as they evolve, I think they will be adequate. Each day we add a little more capability in that regard. There is the problem of getting a transition government established there. This is in the hands of President Aristide and his team. And that's going to take a considerable amount of effort, too, and I'm not really qualified to comment on how well that's going.

Q: Do you believe that General Cedras should leave the country before Mr. Aristide returns?

SEC. PERRY: I believe he should leave the country either before or shortly after his return, yes.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the resistance to Aristide still exists in Haiti, albeit minority resistance, as you say. What will the U.S. role be to protect Aristide once he returns? And if, worst case scenario, he is assassinated, what will be the U.S. role in the power vacuum which is obvious to take place at that point?

SEC. PERRY: I don't want to speculate on assassination contingencies. Let me say, though, that we do have -- we do have -- are assisting in the training of a security force for President Aristide. This will be his security force, not our security force. But we are providing expert assistance -- we, the U.S. government -- are providing expert assistance in the training, in the detailed training of that force, and I believe it will be a force when it's deployed down there which will be of the capability of the kind of security forces which protect other chief executives.

Q: Aside from that, we are not going to be active -- "we" being the United States military -- we're not engaged in actively protecting him?

SEC. PERRY: We will be there after October 15th just as now, creating a security environment, and that has a very important role, but we will not be providing the particular bodyguard force that the president has.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, on Bosnia, you said that you had hoped to widen the amount of targets that the aircraft, if called in, would have to strike in Bosnia. When you're talking about multiple targets, are you still talking about the tit for tat, one tank, one piece of artillery? Are you talking about ammunition dumps or fuel?

SEC. PERRY: The main point I was making there is a tactical point. That is, when an air crew goes on a strike, particularly when the weather is tenuous and when the terrain is difficult -- and both are usually true in Bosnia -- it is a substantial disadvantage then to have only a single target to strike, so we want them to have multiple targets.

And so, based on the tactical situation, they'd pick out the one or two targets, or three targets that are the most effective, and that will give them a much more effective operation. I should emphasize, though, that this target list from

which they select is a target list jointly prepared by the NATO commander and the UN commander, the UNPROFOR commander. This is not NATO saying what targets ought to be, this is a joint target list. That process is already in place, and NATO and the UN commanders have already prepared joint target lists, so that's not new. It's just a matter of giving the air crew the flexibility of having several targets when they go out on a --

Q: Was there any discussion of making the punch just harder against Serbs, if that's who you're striking?

SEC. PERRY: This will have that effect. It will make it more effective. That is to say, when they go out they have a higher probability of accomplishing the mission of striking at least one and possibly several different targets.

Q: Mr. Secretary, on the question of readiness, you were -- when you were in Germany, you were also briefed about some of the problems with inadequate training time, and some of the air controllers having received waivers and that sort of thing, and there are other reports of cutback in flying hours and training hours. To what extent is that affecting readiness, and what do you plan to do about that?

SEC. PERRY: That's specifically the question I asked the commander when I was there, and the answer was his troops are ready today. He was citing this to me as an example of something that could cause a problem a few years from now. I specifically asked him that question relative to the air controllers, and he gave me his -- the very person who was presenting the data to me also said yes, they are ready, they're ready to go today. The issue then, what we can do about that then, as I said, is two-fold. First of all, reducing the personnel tempo so the active duty forces are not carrying out all of these contingency operations by getting some guard in reserve forces in there, and that is something that we -- that is already underway and we -- when we plan to expand. I discussed that not only with the commanders at Spangdehlem, but discussed that in some detail with General Joulwan earlier that evening.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, are the Russians on board with this increased airstrike, air activity in Bosnia? And how do the Serbs feel about it?

And are the Serbs keeping their word?

SEC. PERRY: There's a lot wrapped up in that question. Let me just give you some facts that relate to the questions you asked.

First of all, before I went to Spain, I had a detailed, two- or three-hour meeting with General Grachev on just this issue. I reviewed with him all of the -- our concerns in Bosnia, the particular issues of NATO airstrikes in Bosnia, and I told him what I was going to present to the defense ministers at Bosnia. So he was very well aware of what it was I was going to be proposing there, and what I proposed there is basically what the ministers accepted.

Then just this morning, on returning from my trip, I called General Grachev again and briefed him not just on what the media accounts of the meeting had been, but the background; what was behind our discussions, and wanted to emphasize something which the media reports have not emphasized, that we were sustaining the dual key arrangement, we were not proposing to have NATO unilaterally decide strikes, and we were not proposing preemptive strikes. These strikes are only in response to known and stated violations.

Q: Mr. Secretary, there was an issue you were very much identified with just a couple of months ago, and I hope this doesn't come out of the blue, but that was the Korea issue. There was a period two months ago where we thought we might be on the verge of a breakthrough, and now things are very much more complicated and don't look as promising. What is your assessment of that issue as we go back into the talks with the North Koreans, and do you think we still need to have the sanctions threat in reserve?

SEC. PERRY: Michael, I would say, first of all, that my concern on that problem today is the same as my concern was a few months ago. It could be the single-most security problem we're facing if we cannot get it resolved. The talks were a very important step forward in dealing with that problem, but talking isn't the same as agreeing and we have not, to this point, reached an agreement yet.

I don't want to give you -- give you a forecast or an assessment of how they're going to come, except to say, number one, we do not have an agreement, yet; we have important issues still

separating the North Korean and American side. And secondly, we are still talking and we plan to continue to talk to try to get these issues resolved. I don't want to estimate what we would do if the talks break down. That's another complicated question.

Yes?

Q: Can I follow that up? I understand that the second of two aircraft carriers that were in waters off Korea has withdrawn. Is that because tensions have eased, or is it in response to North Korean complaints about the presence of those carriers, and are you concerned that pulling them out after the planes may send the wrong signal?

SEC. PERRY: Both signals are wrong. The aircraft carrier was not sent in there as a signal to North Korea, it was sent in there on a routine deployment and, therefore, taking it out was not a signal. Neither of these signals is true. The carrier was not there as a signal, it was there as just a routine deployment and routine training. The North Koreans chose to interpret this as a provocative action on our part. It was never so intended. I state that flatly and without ambiguity.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, you spoke about the problems at Spangdehlem in a sort of hypothetical sense. But wasn't the shoot-down of the helicopters in Iraq at least partially a result of these sort of problems over there? And what kind of effect do you think on the people there the prosecution of the AWACS crews and the F-15 pilot is having?

SEC. PERRY: I discussed that latter point, which is the attitude both of the senior commanders there and of some of the commanders at the air base, on their attitude about the prosecution, the follow-up to the Iraqi helicopter shoot-down. And the -- all of the people that I talked to felt that we were proceeding -- we in this case being the Air Force -- was proceeding in a careful and judicious manner, which on the one hand treated this as a serious incident, which it clearly was, but on the other hand was protecting the rights of the individuals involved.

And what has -- as you know, John, where we are right now is going through a process which in the civilian equivalent is more like convening a grand jury, to determine whether a

specific charge is going to be brought against individuals. This is a systematic and orderly process, and it needs a systematic and orderly process, and it needs to be because of the rights of the individuals that could be charged on this.

In terms of the first half of your question, John, is a fair question, which was, did the Iraqi shoot-down, helicopter shoot-down, indicate a lack of readiness or was it a result of weakness in training? And it's a complicated -- to give a quick answer to that, I have to summarize by saying that to a list of four or five deficiencies, any one of which had it not happened, that helicopter would not have happened. Most of those, all of them except one, were in no way related to the readiness issue. Indeed, the helicopter crew showed excellent performance and first-class readiness. The fighter pilots were all too capable, as it turned out, of executing a combat mission. One area which is exactly on the point that you raised is that the AWACS crew, our judgment was, did not perform up to standards. And it's also true that AWACS has traditionally had a high operational tempo, and we do think that's an important issue and I believe is a very important -- not just for AWACS, but there are three or four classes of aircraft -- C-130 is another one, by the way -- where we have higher than desired operational tempo. And we are taking actions in all of those areas, not just in AWACS but in all of them, to get those operational tempos reduced.

Yes?

Q: Can I ask you --

STAFF: That will be the last question.

SEC. PERRY: Last question.

Q: Thank you. Back on Haiti for one moment. Can you offer any more clarity about your guidance to military commanders on under what circumstances U.S. troops will be involved in trying to stop street violence in Haiti? It does seem that some days we see them involved in it and some days we don't, and I'm wondering what your guidance to commanders is on that subject.

SEC. PERRY: The guidance to commanders is very clear, well understood by us, well understood by them. I don't think I can illuminate it very well in a kind of a 15-second press conference answer. I will say this, though, that there's a sharp distinction between our combat troops down there who are on a

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quick reaction force standby to go in and quell a disturbance if it occurs, and the military police and the civilian military operations that are out actually on the streets in squads, and they are performing functions much like -- they do have police functions that they're performing right now, and they have very precise rules of engagement about when they can use force and when not.

And finally, there is -- part of our activity has been disarming the paramilitary, and that was targeted to particular parts of the paramilitary that we had reason to believe might be causing or provoking violence, and it was done in a preemptive way to try to prevent that violence from occurring in the future.

Q: I could I briefly follow up, then, should we then interpret that to mean that these civil-military squads you talk about would probably be staying in Haiti somewhat longer than the combat troops?

SEC. PERRY: No, because all of these forces -- the combat troops phase down according to the rules which I described to you as the order improves and as the multinational forces come in. The police force and the civil-military force will phase out as the Haitian police force, under the new government, comes up. And that's going to be a function of how effective the international police monitors and international police trainers are. That international police training is already well underway. They're training some of the Haitians who are at Guantanamo; they already have started their training courses.

The whole key to success of getting our military forces out of there quickly is bringing up a Haitian force. And that depends to a very great extent on the effectiveness of these police monitors and police trainers.

Thank you very much.

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